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Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-94-251
Friday
30 December 1994

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Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-94-251 *30 December 1994*

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Arab-Israeli Talks

Sha'th, Israelis View 'Next Stage' of Autonomy

TA2912175794 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1600 GMT 29 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Nabil Sha'th, in charge of international coordination in the Palestinian Authority [PA] met today with the newly appointed head of the Foreign Ministry's Autonomy Department Ilan Barukh, in Gaza City. Also attending were Avraham Katz-'Oz, former minister of agriculture and the head of the multilateral negotiations on water, as well as Dr. Ya'ir Hirschfeld and Ron Pundaq, who were both key initiators in the initial negotiations with the Palestinians which led to the Oslo agreement.

Sources in the PA told Qol Yisra'el that the subject of the talks was overcoming the obstacles in implementing the next stage of the autonomy process.

Inter-Arab Affairs

Tripartite 'Mini-Summit' Concludes in Alexandria

Mubarak, al-Asad, Fahd Hold Final Talks

NC2912141094 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1355 GMT 29 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Alexandria, 29 December—Egyptian President Husni Mubarak, Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad, and Saudi King Fahd Ibn-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud held a final session of talks at the al-Ma'murah rest house in Alexandria this afternoon. The session was attended by Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, Egyptian Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif, and the foreign ministers of Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Syria.

Musa on Foreign Ministers Meeting

NC2912154194 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1405 GMT 29 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Alexandria, 29 Dec (MENA)—After a three-hour meeting among the foreign minister of Egypt, Syria, and Saudi Arabia today, Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa said the ministers reviewed all the tracks of the peace process, including the Palestinian track.

Asked whether they discussed the expansion of Israeli settlements, Musa said they discussed all developments, positive or negative, in the Palestinian and all other negotiating tracks.

On Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar's remarks that he is dismayed at some Arabs' rush toward normalization with Israel, Musa said: We took this point into consideration and discussed the situation in the region in general and its relationship to the peace process. We also discussed other problems in the region.

He added: We considered the various activities on all tracks and their relationship to peace. We also took into consideration the strengthening of relations, as long as it lies within the framework of the peace process. We are not against this. We also considered the slow pace of the peace process, both on the Palestinian and Syrian tracks.

The foreign minister called on all concerned parties to make every possible effort to facilitate the peace process and not to hinder progress on all tracks.

He denied that the peace process has reached a dead end, but he said the challenges to the peace process, particularly on the Palestinian track, are now immense. He said Egypt is calling on all sides to work to surmount the obstacles and implement the existing agreements accurately. He said the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations must arrange for elections and the redeployment of the Israeli forces, pursuant to the agreement. This will help us to move to the final stage where the Palestinian people will exercise their right to self-determination, he said.

Musa said the three foreign minister also discussed developing the role of the Arab League.

He stressed that Egypt views the building or expansion of Israeli settlements as an obstacle to peace.

Asked about the possibility of reviving the role of the tripartite Arab committee—comprised of Egypt, Syria, and Saudi Arabia—which was formed at the ministerial level in 1990, Musa said: Today, coordination among the three countries will be broader, as shown by the results that will be forwarded to the summit.

Syrian Request on Ties With Israel Noted

NC2912182694 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 29 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] A source close to the Saudi delegation [to the mini-summit in Alexandria] has said that Saudi Arabia accepted the Syrian request not to normalize relations with Israel quickly as long as the peace negotiations on the Syrian-Israeli track are not fruitful.

Tripartite Summit Concludes

JN2912153694 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 29 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Alexandria—The summit that brought together President Hafiz al-Asad, Egyptian President Husni Mubarak, and Saudi King Fahd concluded in Alexandria today.

President Hafiz al-Asad held a meeting with Egyptian President Muhammad Husni Mubarak at noon today at Alexandria's al-Muntazah Palace before the two leaders left for al-Ma'murah Rest House, where Saudi King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the custodian of the two holy mosques, is staying.

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Fahd, al-Asad Depart

NC2912164094 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1610 GMT 29 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Alexandria, 29 Dec (MENA)—The custodian of the two holy mosques, King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz of Saudi Arabia, and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad left Alexandria this evening at the end of the Egyptian-Saudi-Syrian summit. [passage omitted]

Final Communique Issued

NC2912163194 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1517 GMT 29 Dec 94

["Final communique" issued after a summit among Egypt, Syria, and Saudi Arabia in Alexandria on 28-29 December—recorded; read by Egyptian Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif]

[FBIS Translated Text] At the noble invitation of His Excellency President Muhammad Husni Mubarak of the Arab Republic of Egypt to the custodian of the two holy mosques, King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud of Saudi Arabia, and His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad of the Syrian Arab Republic, the three leaders held meetings on 25 and 26 Rajab, 1415 Hegira, corresponding to 28 and 29 December 1994. As part of the policy of cooperation and consultations among the three countries, the leaders, in an atmosphere of brotherhood and mutual confidence, reviewed their special relations in the various political, economic, and cultural fields. They stressed their determination to develop and bolster them within a framework of economic cooperation based on expanding and strengthening fruitful cooperation among their countries in the areas of trade, investment, and development with a view to serving the common interests and the wellbeing of the Arab nation.

The three countries are part of the Arab homeland, with an influential role to play in preserving its vital interests, and they interact with developments in the Arab arena. The three leaders therefore agreed that the role of the Arab League and its institutions be boosted so that it will remain the mother Arab establishment that embraces all Arab activity pursuant to the lofty objectives of the Arab League Charter.

Our common interests and international economic developments require that the capabilities of our Arab nation be gathered within a strong Arab economic framework able to serve Arab interests. Since cooperation among the three countries is a mainstay of common Arab action, the leaders are determined to redouble the efforts of their countries to implement and develop existing Arab agreements and to support the march of common Arab economic action and enable the economic sectors to play their pioneering role in serving these objectives.

The Arab nation's ability to boost its solidarity and joint action and to strengthen its role and participation on the international level requires that the concerned Arab states redouble their efforts to solve their bilateral problems by peaceful means. In this context, the leaders expressed a firm belief that these problems, no matter how complicated they appear, will not be impossible to solve if intentions are good and the spirit of confidence prevails. On the other hand, solving the problem that resulted from Iraq's invasion of Kuwait requires that the Arab countries emphasize their respect for Arab and international legitimacy and show serious and sincere commitment to the Arab League Charter and the Collective Arab Defense Pact.

The leaders of the three states called on Iraq to complete the step it took of recognizing Kuwait and its borders by fully adhering to all relevant UN Security Council resolutions so that the suffering of the fraternal Iraqi people can end and so that there will be a suitable atmosphere for consolidating security and stability in the Arab world.

Out of the three states' desire to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the region as a strategic option and the sincere efforts they have undertaken to remove the obstacles to the peace process, the three leaders affirmed that this peace should be based on Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, and 425 and on the land-for-peace principle. Within this context, the leaders highly commended Syria's stance and its serious efforts to promote the peace process and affirmed their firm support for its just demands. The leaders also affirmed their call for Israel's withdrawal from all of the Golan to the 4 June 1967 line and from southern Lebanon and the occupied Palestinian territories, including Arab Jerusalem. They also affirmed their support for the Palestinian people's efforts to exercise their legitimate right to self-determination.

The three states called on the international community, especially the co-sponsors of the peace process, to work diligently to remove the obstacles created by the Israeli side to the peace process. In this context, the three leaders affirmed their demand for the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, above all nuclear weapons.

Looking forward to their next meeting to continue the process of political coordination and cooperation among their three states, the leaders expressed their deep gratitude for His Excellency Muhammad Husni Mubarak, president of the Arab Republic of Egypt, for his hospitality and welcome.

Issued in Alexandria on 26 Rajab, 1415 Hegira, corresponding to 29 December 1994.

Israeli Request To Join League Shows Arab 'Humiliation'

MM2912120694 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 23 Dec 94 p 1

[Article by 'Abd-al-Bari 'Atwan: "Israel and Joining the League"]

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[FBIS Translated Text] We do not know exact details of the Israeli request to join the Arab League. However, what we do know—if we are correct—reflects the state of humiliation that this nation is experiencing in this bad Arab era.

If we review what has happened and has been happening since 2 August 1990—namely, collapses at all levels—the impression is that nothing is strange or impossible.

Who could have imagined that Egypt, Syria, and the Gulf states would join an alliance with the United States, Britain, and other Western states to thwart an Arab solution and move Iraq out of Kuwait by force and then destroy its military and economic capabilities and support the blockade imposed on it, despite our full acknowledgement that the invasion was a mistake and a catastrophe.

Who could have imagined that the Arab frontline states, led by Syria, would go to the Madrid conference and not to the international peace conference; that the PLO would sign the Oslo accord and accept limited self-rule in the Gaza Strip and the Jericho area, while the settlements continue to exist and the talks on Jerusalem's future are postponed; or that Jordan would sign a peace treaty resulting in "hot normalization" with Israel and a full exchange of diplomatic relations, raising the Israeli flag in Amman.

The Arab scene has witnessed numerous enigmas over the past five years, and nothing can prevent a new addition such as Israel's joining its new "sisters" in the Arab League.

The paradox is that the negotiations between the Arabs and Israel are more acceptable—and maybe successful—than their [the Arabs'] negotiations with one another. And the enmity with Israel has begun to drop to low levels, compared with inter-Arab hostilities. The negotiations with it over the demarcation of its border are much easier than the negotiations among Gulf states, on the grounds that it [Israel] is more acceptable.

If we take the recent Casablanca Islamic summit as an example and compare it with the economic summit that preceded it in the same place, we will find that the latter—in which Israel participated through its prime minister, foreign minister, and half of its cabinet—was more successful and produced less disagreements than the former, in which Israel did not participate.

We saw on television screens how most Arab leaders did not exchange greetings at the Islamic summit, how they left the summit without meeting one another, and how the efforts exerted to achieve the desired reconciliation failed. Yet these leaders took no offense at meeting with Israeli officials in the corridors of the United Nations or on the sidelines of the multilateral committees' meetings, which were a cover for indirect normalization.

The Arab League's statement about the impossibility of Israel's joining it, because the charter prohibits it, is of no real value. Because the charter itself, and all the literature of the League, its specialized organizations, and the [Arab League] Council's resolutions prohibit reconciliation with the Hebrew state. But reconciliation has taken place and normalization is in full swing.

Furthermore, the charter is not a sacred document and can be amended to accommodate the new guest, since the intentions are good among most Arabs.

So if Israel is demanding that the PLO charter be amended and some of its clauses abolished—and its demand is encountering concealed approval from Palestinian parties—it will not be strange or difficult for it to demand that the League's charter be amended, now that it has become the regional superpower whose friendship is sought by all.

Israel will join the League and it will work to turn it into a Middle Eastern league. It is a matter of time. There is no longer anything strange in this marching Hebrew era.

League Official Decries Israeli Settlement Activity

NC2812222394 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2044 GMT 28 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 28 Dec (MENA)—Sa'id Kamal, assistant Arab League secretary general and director of the Arab League General Directorate for Palestine Affairs, has condemned Israel's actions in the occupied Arab territories, as illustrated by its expansion of Israeli settlements there. He said these actions contradict all international norms, commitments, and resolutions and also Israel's pledge to the major powers to pursue a peace policy.

In remarks to reporters today, Kamal said that Israel is placing new obstacles on the road to peace by carrying out such actions. He urged the international community and the sponsors of the peace process—the United States and the Russian Federation—to intervene without delay and halt these Israeli actions.

He added that Israel's measures contradict numerous promises that Israel has made, notably a pledge made to the United States to halt settlement activity. This was done in return for obtaining U.S. loan guarantees and as a precaution against derailing the peace process and restoring the regional tension which had threatened regional and world peace.

Sa'id Kamal asserted that Israel's actions are not merely a contradiction of UN resolutions and the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles but are, indeed, part of Israel's policy of establishing what it calls Greater Jerusalem, explaining that Israel's Jerusalem scheme involves the seizure of one-third of the West Bank's territory.

He cited in this connection news agency reports yesterday about the expansion of the West Bank Efrat settlement by 40 hectares.

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Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat Reaffirms Jerusalem To Be State Capital

JN3012072094 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0600 GMT 30 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the Palestinian National Authority, has reaffirmed that the Palestinian state will reach the West Bank and that Jerusalem is the capital of the Palestinian state despite Israel's attempts to obstruct the negotiations.

At the celebration held at the Grand al-'Umari Mosque in Gaza on the occasion of the Prophet Muhammad's ascension day, his excellency said: Nobody has the right to undermine the peace process. There are attempts aimed at preventing us from reaching the West Bank and Jerusalem. His excellency then asserted that the Palestinian state will reach the West Bank and that Jerusalem is the capital of this state.

'Arafat Receives Kozyrev Message on Russian Support

JN3012081094 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0600 GMT 30 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat has received a message from Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev on the latest developments in the Palestinian arena. The Palestinian News Agency, WAFA, said that in the message Kozyrev asserted Russia's support for the Palestinian efforts and its interest in what is taking place in the Palestinian arena. Kozyrev said that Russia will continue its efforts to give momentum to the peace process on the Palestinian track.

'Arafat Seeking French Help To Move Fighters

JN3012095894 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 30 Dec 94 pp 1, 27

[Report by Lima Nabil in Paris; all French and Moroccan names as published]

[FBIS Translated Text] AL-RA'Y—Palestinian Authority [PA] Chairman Yasir 'Arafat has asked the French Foreign Ministry to ensure the departure of approximately 2,000 Palestinian fighters from southern Lebanon, particularly from Sidon and Tyre camps, aboard ships to Gaza Port. French sources disclosed to AL-RA'Y that PA Culture Minister Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh conveyed this request to the French Foreign Ministry during his recent visit to Paris.

The French sources noted that this urgent request followed the recent clashes that took place inside the Palestinian camps, and is an effort to reinforce police and security organs in Gaza and to contain the Islamic opposition represented by Hamas [the Islamic Resistance Movement] and the Islamic Jihad.

In another development, sources told AL-RA'Y that Yasir 'Arafat recently added Gabriel Nippun to his economic advisers. Nippun, who is a Moroccan Jew born in Casablanca, is the father of the wife of de Gaullist Deputy Pierre Lulush, who is close to Paris Mayor Jacques Chirac.

The appointment of Nippun to this economic and financial post angered some of 'Arafat's aides, who claim that 'Arafat is not relying on Palestinian experts. Those aides noted that there are plenty of Palestinian experts in the diaspora.

It is known that Nippun worked for the Marseille Dassu Company and chaired the Galafan Company for Engineering Construction before supervising the American Company Bethlehem Steel.

PA Official Praises Alexandria Summit Results

JN3012081894 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0600 GMT 30 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The two-day Alexandria summit held by Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad, Egyptian President Muhammad Husni Mubarak, and Saudi King Fahd has drawn official and non-official reactions from the surrounding countries.

The Palestinian National Authority [PNA; Palestinian Authority, PA], under the chairmanship of His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat, has expressed its satisfaction with the results of the summit. The PNA believes that the summit supports the Palestinian stand in the face of Israeli plots aimed at bypassing the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles.

PNA Secretary General al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim said: We highly praise the stand of the three leaders, who asserted in their final communique the need to reinforce Arab solidarity and the role of the Arab League, as well as the need for Israeli withdrawal from all occupied territory, including Jerusalem. 'Abd-al-Rahim said that the position of the three leaders comes in response to the onslaught of Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory in general, and in Jerusalem in particular. He added that Israel is mistaken if it believes that it can do whatever it wants without any Arab, Islamic, or international reaction. [passage omitted]

Quray' on Settlement Expansion, Ties With Jordan

NC3012100294 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0610 GMT 30 Dec 94

[Telephone interview with PA Economy Minister Ahmad Quray', in Jerusalem, by Ramadan Siksik, in Cairo; date not given; from the "Dialogue From Afar" program—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Siksik] Good morning, Mr. Quray'.

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[Quray'] Good morning to you.

[Siksik] Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat has appealed to the Alexandria mini-summit that was held by President Husni Mubarak, Saudi King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad to discuss the issues of Israeli settlement activity and Jerusalem and adopt a position supporting the Palestinians on them. In your view, what effect will this tripartite summit have on the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations?

[Quray'] We view this minisummit with great relief. We consider it a step in the right direction at this delicate and sensitive time. We hope that, among other issues, it will discuss ways of restoring Arab solidarity. The upcoming critical stage requires Arab coordination on the highest levels. We are certain that President 'Arafat's appeal to the minisummit will fall on responsive ears and get the attention it deserves.

[Siksik] What can you tell us about the current situation in light of the settlement activity and the meeting that the Palestinian National Authority [PNA; Palestinian Authority, PA] held to discuss this issue?

[Quray'] We regard what is happening in this connection a very serious challenge to the peace process. It is well-known that it was agreed to postpone negotiations over the settlements and to freeze the settlements as they are until the permanent status negotiations begin. The Declaration of Principles was very clear about this. It did not specifically mention the settlements except to say that negotiations over them will be delayed until a later stage but it did state that it is not permissible to prejudice the outcome of the permanent status negotiations. The current expansion of settlements, particularly around Jerusalem, is the greatest threat so far to the peace process and the Palestinian-Israeli agreement. It was this concern that made the PA hold an urgent meeting to discuss the various aspects and dangers of this issue. The Israeli occupation authorities must not, under any circumstances, try to establish a fait accompli while claiming to pursue a peace operation.

[Siksik] What did the PA decide to do about this issue?

[Quray'] We decided to reject this Israeli action and to contact all the countries of the world, the UN Security Council, the peace process sponsors, Egypt and Norway, who hosted the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations, the EU, Japan, and others to explain the dangers of this development. We also decided to submit the issue to the Security Council to halt this violation of the peace agreement. Israeli measures on the settlements and Jerusalem constitute a real violation of the peace agreement. [passage omitted]

[Siksik] Palestinian-Jordanian relations ran into some obstacles in connection with the Jerusalem issue. Will President 'Arafat and King Husayn of Jordan hold a summit in the near future?

[Quray'] His Majesty King Husayn and His Excellency President 'Arafat had a telephone conversation which, I believe, has paved the way for a summit in the very near future. They will place the Palestinian-Jordanian relationship in the proper status that it deserves.

[Siksik] Mr. Ahmad Quray', Palestinian economy minister, thank you very much. You are always welcome to the Voice of the Arabs.

[Quray'] Thanks to you.

Palestinian TV Said To Cover Jericho

TA2912180294 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 28 Dec 94 p 8

[Report by Kawsar Salam]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gaza—Hisham Makki, coordinator of the Palestinian Broadcasting and Television Corporation [PBTC], has said that as of next week the television transmissions will cover the Jericho area.

Makki said that at present the television transmissions cover the Gaza area from al-Majdal to al-'Arish and that in most of these places audio reception is of a very high quality. He added: "We will try to extend the transmission range from the beginning of the new year."

Makki said: "Since the start of television transmission at the beginning of September 1994, we have aired many Arabic and foreign programs, children's programs, plays, and newscasts from 1800 until 2400 [1600-2200 GMT]. From the beginning of 1995, Palestinian television will broadcast from 1700 to 0100 [1500-2300 GMT]. This transmission will include two newscasts, one in Arabic and another in English, in addition to health, agricultural, family, and educational programs.

Makki said that the PBTC can make direct relay television transmissions via satellite. It relayed live the ceremony in which President 'Arafat received the Nobel Peace Prize, the opening session of the Islamic summit conference, and President 'Arafat's concluding statement at the conference.

Hamas Announces Establishment of 'New Terrorist Squad'

TA2912155794 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 29 Dec 94 p 19

[Report by David Regev]

[FBIS Translated Text] Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] yesterday announced the establishment of a new terrorist squad, named after Ayman Radi, a supporter of Hamas who served with the Palestinian Police and who blew himself up while wearing an explosive charge during a suicide bombing in Jerusalem at the beginning of the week.

The establishment of the new unit was announced yesterday by terrorists from the 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam squad in the course of a mass memorial yesterday for the terrorist, who came from Khan Yunus.

During the ceremony, Ahmad Bahr, one of the leaders of Hamas in the Gaza Strip, said that Radi committed suicide after being humiliated during his service with the

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Palestinian Police. Bahr asserted that "people like Radi should be guarding locations of importance for the Palestinians, such as Orient House in Jerusalem."

As the ceremony ended, six members of the 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam squad fired in the air and announced the establishment of the new squad which will carry out terrorist acts against Israeli targets.

Hamas Spokesman Condemns Rabin's Visit to Oman

JN2912194394 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1730 GMT 29 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] The Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, has condemned the Sultanate of Oman for playing host to the terrorist Rabin. A Hamas official spokesman said the movement views the visit as one of the most glaring examples of extending recognition to the usurper Zionist entity and a serious step along the road of normalizing ties with the Zionist enemy. Such visits, the movement's spokesman added, will potentially lead to Arab-Muslim officialdom lending legitimacy to the Zionist entity and its theft of land and sanctities. The Arab and Muslim nations, including the brotherly Omani people are taking a commendable stand by refusing to set up ties with the Zionist enemy. These nations reject official action to firm up the Zionist occupation of Palestinian land and holy places. They also reject all kinds of dealings, at any level whatsoever, and normal ties with the criminal enemy, the Hamas statement said.

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Algeria

Profile of Airbus Attack Leader Reported

BR2912124094 Esch-sur-Alzette TAGEBLATT in French 28 Dec 94 p 5

[Unattributed report: "Abdallah Yahia, an 'Executioner of a Rare Savagery'—The Leader of the Airbus Commando Group"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The identity of the leader of the Air France Airbus Islamic commando group was released in Algiers on Monday [26 December]. Abdallah Yahia is a leader of the Eucalypti district, the most derelict and criminal district in Algiers. Many young desperadoes of the GIA [Armed Islamic Group] have come from this district, located in the eastern suburbs.

Algerian Interior Minister Abderrahmane Meziane-Cherif did not provide any information on the three other members of the commando group who were killed during the assault by GIGN [National Gendarmerie Intervention Unit] elite troops at Marseille's Marignane airport on Monday.

Yahia is not one of the main "amirs" of the GIA, but is presented rather as an "operator," according to information circulating in Algiers in certain circles close to the Islamists.

The interior minister said that Yahia had carried out "attacks of a rare violence and extreme savagery." He said that the members of the group were wanted by the security forces.

This group is said to belong to the GIA phalange which calls itself "El-Mouakioune Bi Eddima" ("Those who sign with blood"), which has an extremely ruthless reputation. This is the phalange which claimed the hijacking of the Airbus, in a text presented as emanating from the GIA and transmitted to AFP.

A section of this phalange is reported to be the true author of the attack on Ain Allah city in Algiers on 3 August 1994, which left five dead, including three French gendarmes and two consular agents, according to some sources.

According to eyewitness accounts, the Airbus hijackers wore Air Algeria uniforms. The use of disguises is a frequently used tactic by armed groups.

Derelict Area

Yahia was resident in the area called the "Red Castle" in the heart of the Eucalypti district, the Algerian interior minister said. This abandoned area is regarded as "the stronghold of strongholds" of the GIA Islamists in the Eucalypti, where very many executions have been carried out.

The first woman ever, a police employee, was executed in the Eucalypti district in 1993. A journalist of the ALGERIE ACTUALITE weekly magazine had been killed at home by Islamists disguised as police officers.

"No one dares to venture down there," an Algerian explained. Many inhabitants have left the neighborhood to flee the terror.

The Red Castle is an area of makeshift dwellings, made from parpen and sheet metal, criss-crossed by muddy alleyways, next to which waste water flows in the open air. Last year the security forces carried out many combing operations there.

The GIA is mainly made up of young people—the average age is below 20—who come from these rundown, abandoned suburbs of Algiers.

Ben Bella Condemns French Support to Military

BR2912134694 Rome L'UNITA in Italian 29 Dec 94 p 17

[Interview with former President Ahmed Ben Bella by Alberto Di Giovannangeli; place and date not given: "West Wrong To Support Military"—first two paragraphs are L'UNITA introduction]

[FBIS Translated Text] "Algeria is in danger of disintegrating. The final glimmer of hope of a national reconciliation is disappearing." This was said by Ahmed Ben Bella, a leading figure in the liberation war against France and Algeria's first president after independence. "The West mistakenly believed that the military were the 'lesser evil,' but by supporting them it has helped only the most bloodthirsty wing of Islamic fundamentalism. Paris has fanned the flames."

"In my life I have experienced all the crucial periods in my country's history; I have learned to live with suffering and to come to terms with tragic situations. But what is happening now in Algeria exceeds even the most pessimistic predictions. Dialogue remains the only possible way to avert the country's fragmentation, but it will take time, a long time, until we can restore the minimal preconditions to attempt a national reconciliation. Algeria's immediate future will continue to be marked by hatred and bloodshed." Ahmed Ben Bella did not conceal his distress over the tragic events shaking Algeria, of which he was the first president after independence (3 July 1962.) The 78-year-old "lion of Algeria," the champion of dialogue, was critical of France: "It has flexed its muscles, but its support for the military government has helped to strengthen the militaristic wing of Islamic fundamentalism. With its policy of defending the Army's 'bloodless coup' Paris brought about the steady isolation of the Islamic leaders that displayed their willingness to engage in dialogue. Now it is talking about equidistance, but it is too late.

[Giovannangeli] The tragic outcome to the hijacking of the French Airbus, the retaliation by the fundamentalists who killed four missionaries guilty only of carrying French and Belgian passports: Where is Algeria going?

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[Ben Bella] Toward disintegration. In recent weeks almost all the glimmers of hope of an attempt to achieve national reconciliation have disappeared. On both sides the hawks have prevailed—that is, those who from the outset invested completely in a sharp conflict. The country is falling apart, and with every day that passes the conflict gains further fuel, not only religious, but ethnic...

[Giovannangeli] Is dialogue now impossible in the Algerian inferno?

[Ben Bella] Unfortunately what is happening is moving in the opposite direction to that which prompted many Algerian democratic forces including the FIS [Islamic Salvation front] to gather in Rome a month ago at the invitation of the community of Sant'Egidio. There is no alternative to dialogue if we want to avert a terrible bloodbath and the disintegration of the state. This is why I will continue to struggle—but with an awareness that it will be impossible to halt the violence in the immediate term.

[Giovannangeli] But are there sufficient forces within Algerian society to halt this spiral of bloodshed?

[Ben Bella] Most of the Algerian public want dialogue and seek peace. But they are hostages of fierce minorities, of military apparatuses that have decided to struggle for power using the only language that they know—that of terror. Within the Islamic field a strong willingness emerged to seek a dialogue with the moderate forces present within the FLN [National Liberation Front] and among the parties of the nonconfessional Left, but as soon as an opening appeared the Army hawks would intervene to demand an iron- fist policy against the "Islamic dregs," in the knowledge that they were thus playing into the hands of the most radical fundamentalist wing. You see, it is not a question of whether there are sufficient forces within Algerian society to defeat the masters of death, but a question of how the international community can help to strengthen the democrats' voice.

[Giovannangeli] You are making an indictment of the West.

[Ben Bella] Let this be clear: I have too much regard for my people to believe that their liberation depends exclusively on the "wisdom" and "magnanimity" of the West. The fact is that the West, starting with France, has been an active and destructive agent in the Algerian crisis. This, because from the outset, that is, ever since the 1992 military coup, the West had backed the old government, in the belief that it was a "lesser evil" than the Islamic bugbear.

[Giovannangeli] Whereas?

[Ben Bella] That choice has proved devastating for Algeria. This, because the old leadership class were indefensible, because the strength of the Islamic forces was determined by the spreading corruption, the intolerable privileges enjoyed by the ruling elites. Fundamentalism's strength also lies in the failure of a social and cultural model borrowed from the West, the failure to defend our own identity and traditions. Islam is this too: the "lifebuoy" to which people cling to avoid being overwhelmed by a new economic and cultural colonialism. Algeria's salvation lies in a profound renewal of its leadership classes, in its ability to combine modernity and tradition, in its return to the original principles of the independence struggle—those of equality and social justice—and this can only happen through the union of the democratic forces willing to negotiate, that are present not only within Algerian society but also within the FLN and the FIS.

[Giovannangeli] What would you like to request from Europe at this crucial moment in your country's history?

[Ben Bella] Europe cannot impose dialogue, but it can facilitate it by supporting the champions of dialogue, by strengthening the "other Algeria," that which is mobilizing to demand more democracy, against fundamentalist fanaticism and the military's iron-fist policy. To support the present regime is merely to play into the hands of the Islamic radicals and of their limitless "Holy War" against the West.

Sudan

'Council' To Lobby for Trade Center Bombers

EA2712123594 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 2245 GMT 26 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] The committee of the International People's Friendship Council has issued a statement concerning those Sudanese who are under arrest in U.S. prisons under the charge of causing an explosion at the World Trade Center in New York. The committee announced in the statement that it would take up the defense of these citizens in all forums—local, regional, and international. In the statement, the committee said it would contact organizations concerned with human rights inside and outside the United States to brief them on the conditions of the arrested persons, and to ask them to intervene on the basis of human rights, justice, and freedom, as stipulated by international conventions.

The committee also announced the establishment of a national fund to collect donations to pay for lawyers and others to be sent to defend them. The committee decided to invite Sudanese popular organizations to an urgent meeting to discuss this matter.

Iraqi Assembly Speaker, Delegation Arrive

'Firm' Relations Praised

JN2612195294 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1840 GMT 26 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Khartoum, 26 Dec (INA)—Iraqi National Assembly Speaker Sa'di Mahdi Salih and the delegation accompanying him arrived in Khartoum today on a visit to Sudan which will last one week.

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In a statement to an INA correspondent in Khartoum, Sa'di Mahdi Salih said the objective of the visit is to take part in the brother Sudanese' celebrations on their independence day, which is an occasion that is dear to both the Iraqis and the Sudanese.

He added: The visit is also to hold talks with the brother Sudanese on all that would contribute to restoring Arab solidarity and cooperation, beginning with Sudan and Iraq, which have firm and entrenched relations despite the [words indistinct] through which the two countries have passed.

He clarified: Both Sudan and Iraq are facing challenges, and we need these fraternal meetings to confront these challenges whether they are political or economic challenges.

He stressed that cooperation between Iraq and Sudan will pave the way for the establishment of distinguished Arab relations, especially since the Arab nation needs such relations in light of the current challenges and difficult circumstances. He said that the Arab nation needs solidarity between any two Arab countries in order to restore the unity of its stand and to be able to confront all difficulties and challenges.

The Iraqi National Assembly speaker said: When Iraq recognized Kuwait's sovereignty and borders, it did not proceed from its concern about Iraq's interests only or due to the blockade, but out of Iraq's awareness of the current threats to the Arab nation, and the nation's need for solidarity and cooperation to confront these challenges.

Sa'di Mahdi Salih called on all the concerned Arab states to realize this fact and to proceed from the Arab nation's higher interests and not from parochial interests. He said: If we proceed from parochial interests, estrangement among us will aggravate further, something which will weaken the Arab nation.

Parliamentary Talks Begin

JN2712203194 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1855 GMT 27 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Khartoum, 27 Dec (INA)—Talks between the Iraqi National Assembly and the Sudanese Transitional National Assembly began here today.

The Iraqi side to the talks was headed by Sa'di Mahdi Salih, whereas the Sudanese side was led by Muhammad al-Amin Khalifah, chairman of the Transitional National Assembly.

In a speech at the beginning of the talks, Muhammad al-Amin Khalifah commended Iraq's heroic stand under its leader His Excellency President Saddam Husayn as manifested in its confrontation of all forms of plotting and aggression, and also in its defiance of the unfair embargo clamped on its people.

Khalifah reiterated that the victories and accomplishments scored by Iraq will remain an asset and a source of pride to the Arabs, because they reflect the ability to defend the Arab nation at present and in the future.

Khalifah added that Iraq, which has become an easy target for enemies and brothers alike, has turned into a beacon for the Arab people and Islamic world, a hope for liberation and development, and a cherished symbol in the heart and conscience of each and every Arab.

Muhammad al-Amin Khalifah deplored Arab silence over the sufferings of the Iraqi people as well as the injury and slow death to which they are being subjected, saying that this silence is tantamount to contributions toward the success of the anti-Arab U.S.-Zionist scheme. He also reiterated Sudan's support for Iraq in its confrontation of evil enemies, and also in its efforts to cope with the ordeal it is experiencing as a result of the perpetuation of the sanctions.

For his part, and in a similar speech, Sa'di Mahdi Salih appreciated the courageous stands taken by the Sudanese people and government to support the Iraqi people.

Salih added that the colonialist powers have been unable to achieve their evil ambitions and purposes although they have continued to maintain the sanctions and to starve the Iraqi people.

Salih indicated that the hostile conspiracies carried out against Iraq are being currently carried out against Sudan because of its adherence to its firm pan-Arab principles and its championing of justice and the Arab nation's fateful causes.

During the talks, the two sides will discuss the coordination of stands at diplomatic and international forums. They will also address the means to activate efforts to lift the sanctions clamped on the Iraqi people, restore Arab solidarity, and remove the obstacles standing in the way of achieving this objective.

The two sides reviewed bilateral ties in the parliamentary and political fields and the means to promote them in the next phase in the interest of the two fraternal peoples and the Arab nation.

Iraqi Cultural Center Opens in Khartoum

EA2912202894 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 29 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] The speaker of the Transitional National Assembly, Muhammad al-Amin Khalifah, and the speaker of the Iraqi National Assembly, Mr. Sa'di Mahdi Salih, today opened an Iraqi cultural center in Khartoum Bahri as part of the country's independence festivities, which also coincide with the anniversary of the formation of Iraq's brave armed forces on 6 January. The ceremony was attended by various activities. The Iraqi center will offer cultural services, and embraces a library stocked with many publications and books.

The opening ceremony was attended by Mr. 'Abd-al-Basit Sabdarat, the minister of culture and information, and Mr. 'Abd-al-Samad Hamid Yahya, Iraq's ambassador to Sudan.

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Bahrain

AFP, Iranian Reports on Demonstrations Denied

JN3012064694 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0535 GMT 30 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Manama, 29 Dec (WAKH)—An information source in Bahrain has denied reports by certain news agencies and radio stations on the internal situation in Bahrain, saying that the reports carried by these media organs are ridiculous.

The source said AFP and Tehran radio are spreading baseless lies daily and that they are continuing to carry false news on the continuation of demonstrations in the country. The source emphasized the need for these media organs ensure accuracy when carrying such news, and said carrying the news they receive from outside without scrutiny is harmful to their reputation and weakens their credibility.

The source urged the bureau chiefs and correspondents of news agencies and Arab and foreign newspapers in Bahrain to examine the accuracy of the reports that are spread by some individuals who live outside the country and who use fax machines to send these false reports. He regretted that some international media organs depend on these falsifications.

A number of Bahraini officials have emphasized that the situation is completely calm and stable in the country and that there is nothing obstructing life and daily activities in various fields. They said all government and public establishments, banks, and companies continue to operate and have not stopped even for one day for any reasons similar to what has been alleged by some media organs. Efforts have been geared toward maintaining the graces of almighty God on this country in terms of its security, peace, and stability, and preserving the souls and property of its citizens and residents. This can be attained thanks to the awareness of the whole people and the vigilance of the security organ, which works for the security and stability of the country.

Islamic Front Spokesman Cited on 'Intifadah'

TA2912142494 Gaza AL-ISTIQLAL in Arabic 23 Dec 94 p 9

[FBIS Translated Text] In a statement to AL-ISTIQLAL, a spokesman for the Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain said: "What is happening in Bahrain is a popular intifadah inspired by the Palestinian intifadah. It is an expression by all sectors of the Bahraini people, who are daily being subjected to the most severe forms of suppression by a dictatorial tribal government. This intifadah will continue, God willing, until the achievement of its goal: the attainment of basic freedoms and the election of a national assembly that respects the Constitution."

Kuwait

Peacekeeper Shot at on Kuwait-Iraq Border

LD2912141094 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1330 GMT 29 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Kuwait, 29 Dec—Medical sources report that a Romanian soldier working for the cease-fire control mission on the Kuwait-Iraq border is now being treated for an wound to the thigh after a shot was fired at him in the border area at dawn today.

The name of the injured soldier is Danut Yovanov. He is 32 years old, and sources told KUNA that he is now in hospital in an encouraging condition which does not call for concern. The cause of the incident is not yet known, nor is the way it happened. It has not been possible to get in touch with the UN mission in Kuwait to obtain more details.

Iraqi Forces Reportedly Responsible

LD2912154194 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1402 GMT 29 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Kuwait, 29 Dec—The Kuwaiti Defense Ministry says that the shot fired at a UN cease-fire control commission patrolling the Kuwaiti-Iraqi border was fired by Iraqi forces. In a press statement sent to KUNA by fax, the ministry says that the victim, Danut Yovanov, is a Romanian officer with the rank of captain. [passage omitted]

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'Aziz, PFLP Leaders Discuss Israel-PLO Accord

NC2712202194 Paris AFP in English 1827 GMT 27 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baghdad, Dec 27 (AFP)—Hardline Palestinian leaders said Tuesday [27 December] that they had met with senior Iraqi officials to discuss how to torpedo the Israel-PLO autonomy accords.

Two leaders from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), Abu-'Ali Mustafa and 'Abd-al-Rahim Malluh, held talks with Iraqi Vice President Taha Yasin Ramadan and Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz, Mustafa told AFP.

The talks focused on "ways to make the accords fail" and "ways to unite Palestinians and national Arab forces to foil American and Israeli plots in the region," said Mustafa, second in command of the Damascus-based PFLP.

KDP Official: Party Not Responsible for Fighting

JN2812180294 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan in Arabic 1600 GMT 28 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Brother Sami 'Abd-'Abd al-Rahman, member of the Kurdistan Democratic Party [KDP] political bureau, has received a delegation from the Islamic Accord Movement [Harakat al-Wifaq al-Islami]. The delegation comprises Shaykh Jamal al-Wakil, the movement's secretary general; and Kamal al-Radawi, official in charge of foreign affairs.

The members of the delegation voiced anxiety over the recent clashes in Kurdistan and their eagerness to end the dispute as soon as possible.

Brother Sami 'Abd-al-Rahman told them that our party's forces did not start the fighting, and that they remained on the defensive during the armed dispute. He also said our party and its leader, brother Mas'ud Barzani, are ready to do all that is needed to end the dispute and entrench security and stability in Kurdistan.

The Islamic Accord Movement delegation conveyed Shaykh al-Shirazi's greetings to our party's leader, brother Mas'ud Barzani.

Talabani Receives Delegation, Discusses Fighting

NC2912173994 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1605 GMT 29 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Brother Jalal Talabani, secretary general of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, yesterday received a delegation consisting of representatives of 16 parties, organizations, and political movements in Kurdistan. The delegation submitted a memorandum calling for an immediate halt to the current tension in some areas of Kurdistan.

For his part, Talabani affirmed his readiness to undertake diligent efforts to stop the fighting, restore security and stability to these areas, and consolidate the government of Kurdistan. He praised the delegation's efforts aimed at ending the tension. He proposed that a committee be formed consisting of representatives of the 16 parties, organizations, and political movements, in addition to members from the Kurdistan parliament, to undertake the mission of normalizing the situation in Kurdistan.

'Source' Reports DPK-PUK 'Heavy Clashes'

LD3012134394 Tehran IRNA in English 1327 GMT 30 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Piranshahr, W. Azarbaijan Prov., Dec. 30, IRNA—Heavy clashes reported to continue in ten cities of Iraqi Kurdistan over the last two days, an informed source said.

According to the source, the clashes between Democratic Party of Iraq's Kurdistan (DPK) and Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, (PUK) which began 15 days ago, surged in Raniyah, Qali' Diza, Hajji Abad, Halabjah, Choman, Khalifan, Irbil, Sarchava, Shaqlawah Abd Diana [placenames as received].

Inhabitants in border areas in Piranshahr, 900 kms west of here, in a telephone conversation told IRNA that the sound of explosions was audible in Sardasht and Piranshahr.

The two rival parties have fought since April 1994 to control a region which went out of Iraq's control in 1991.

Hundreds of paramilitary forces affiliated with the two parties along with civilians of Kurdistan have been killed since the clashes last April. The exact death toll is not available.

Kurdish sources maintain that continuation of war between the rival factions will force thousands of families to flee to other regions.

AL-THAWRAH on Renewed Fighting in Kurdistan

JN2812120794 Baghdad INA in English 1050 GMT 28 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baghdad, Dec. 28 (INA)—AL-THAWRAH daily of Iraq today said the U.S-protected agents who have the upper hand in the Kurdistan Region have turned everyday life into a non-ending series of fighting, looting and robberies.

In a commentary on the renewed fighting in Kurdistan, AL-THAWRAH, mouthpiece of the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party said those saboteurs have with the support and blessing of their American masters deliberately wrecked schools, health clinics, electricity and communication networks and smuggled their contents outside the country.

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The paper also pointed out the dubious role played by Iran in these acts of sabotage. It stressed that Iran has always been against the Kurds' gain of any humanitarian rights. It said that since the cultural development in the Autonomy Region, under the 17-30 July Revolution, exposed Iran's inhumane and racist stances toward the Kurdish people in Iran it was in its interest to assist in the deterioration of situation there.

The paper criticized the silence, of those calling for the defence of human rights, over the flagrant violations of the Kurdish people's right to security and stability.

AL-THAWRAH expressed confidence that the sincere people of Kurdistan would rise in rejection of the policy of humiliation and starvation being exercised against them. It said that it was now quite clear which party was actually keen on preserving the Kurdish people's right to honorable living.

Paper Attacks ICO Policy, Calls Chief 'Devil'

JN2812121494 Baghdad INA in English 1045 GMT 28 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baghdad, Dec. 28 (INA)—AL-JUMHURIYAH newspaper has lashed out at the unbalanced role and deviate policy being pursued by Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) [ICO] Hamid Algabid versus world Muslims.

In its today article, AL-JUMHURIYAH said shedding tears by Algabid over the bloody events and tragedies in Chechnya was not but a clear-cut contradiction in his attitudes eventually serving interests of his masters in Washington.

The paper made it clear that, "the OIC secretary general expresses his deep concern about what is happening to Muslims of Chechnya and criticises the blind use of the sophisticated weapons against civil targets and urges the international community to end this conflict, at a time he premeditatedly ignores sufferings of 20-million population of Iraq emanating from the oppressive blockade imposed by the U.S and its allies."

The paper referred to the negative attitude adopted by the OIC in 1991 when it had supported the blockade against Iraq and called for keeping it imposed, which claimed lives of thousands of Iraqis and destroyed Iraq's infrastructure.

Algabid has persistently rejected to issue a statement calling for halting the mass annihilation of the Iraqis in Casablanca summit conference, AL—JUMHURIYAH said.

It attacked Algabid's deviate attitude in maintaining silence on America crimes, especially against the civilians in Iraq and the iniquitous blockade imposed since August 1990, describing him as a devil.

Iranian Land, Air, Sea 'Violations' Protested

JN2412135594 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1310 GMT 24 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] New York, 24 Dec (INA)—Iraq has informed the UN General Secretariat that the Iranian regime is continuing to violate the cease—fire resolution and the Tehran agreement on the buffer zone between the two countries.

This came in a memorandum of protest Iraq's Permanent UN Representative Nizar Hamdun has sent to UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus-Ghali. The memorandum says that the Iranian regime carried out a large number of land, air, and sea violations, as well as many provocative operations, against Iraq from 21 November to 13 December.

The memorandum contains a list of positions being maintained and others being established in the buffer zone.

The memorandum also points out that the Iranian side prevented international mail workers from reaching the Iranian opposition members and handing them the mail and forced them to return without delivering the mail.

The memorandum also says that an Iranian fishing boat crossed the territorial waters line in the Shatt al-'Arab area carrying a number of armed people and kidnapped an Iraqi fishing boat.

Violation of Airspace Protested to Arab League

JN2712121594 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1020 GMT 27 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 27 Dec (INA)—Iraq once again protested to the Arab League General Secretariat against the Saudi and Kuwaiti rulers' continued provision of facilities for U.S., British, and French aircraft to violate Iraq's airspace and what this constitutes in terms of seriously threatening the security and sovereignty of Iraq and its national unity.

In a letter to Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, Iraq's permanent representative to the Arab League said that taking off from bases in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, U.S., British, and French aircraft continued to violate Iraq's airspace between 18 and 23 December. These aircraft carried out 462 hostile sorties.

Iraq's representative demanded briefing the Arab League member states on these regrettable facts.

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Rabin Said Considering Resigning, Forming New Cabinet

TA3012111494 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 30 Dec 94 p 3

[Report by Nehama Dowek]

[FBIS Translated Text] "The prime minister will consider tending his resignation to the president if problems continue to surface in the coalition," a senior Labor official said yesterday. "Then, since he will still have a majority in the Knesset to set up a new government, Rabin will do it with a new ministerial lineup, which will assure proper cabinet functioning prior to the general elections."

Many in the Labor leadership who support this evaluation say Rabin is tired of inadequacies in the faction and several ministers, and that he has reached the conclusion that only such a shock might bring them all back to toeing the line. "That is perhaps the only way to remain in power," a senior Labor minister said.

Ministers yesterday sharply criticized Rabin's leadership in the latest crisis. Had the prime minister shown determination he would have summoned the rebellious ministers, called them to order, and not permitted them to spread such embarrassment, which seriously damages the images of Rabin and the government.

Knesset Member (MK) Arye Der'i also believes it is a leadership problem. Der'i said yesterday: "The events of the past two days are a Labor leadership flop. Eli Dayan and Rafi Edri should have resolved the issue quietly with the finance minister or prime minister. If a long school day is acceptable to Rabin and Shohat, then they should have decided on how much, where, and when, and not be dragged behind the two MK's."

Justice Minister David Liba'i was the bluntest. He attacked Eli Dayan and Rafi Edri and said their action was pure blackmail. "They should have been told outright that it is inconceivable," Liba'i said. "The issue is not a long school day, which we could all support, but whether the government is capable of leading and how decisions in it are made. If the reservation is passed, the public will say we caved in. That will mean political blackmail works. I told the prime minister: 'What do you want? Do you want a ragtag government? You should know that such a government can be squeezed. If you do not stand firm against that reservation you will not be able to withstand the others.' The crisis should have regrettably been dealt with differently."

Labor Secretary General Nisim Zvili suggests that the party conference, which will be convened in the first week of April, adopt a resolution that any MK who supports or proposes bills which could be viewed as signifying no confidence in the government, will not be able to compete for a party post. Zvili raised the proposal with the prime minister, and Rabin said he would support it.

Health Minister Efrayim Sne sent a letter to Zvili asking for permission to present an amendment to the party constitution saying that "a party emissary in the Knesset or any other elected body who violates the resolutions of its authorized institutions will not be able to stand for election."

Peres, Beilin Comment on Alexandria Summit

TA2912173694 Tel Aviv Educational Television Network in Hebrew 1500 GMT 29 Dec 94

[Interview with Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres by Dan Margalit in Jerusalem—live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Margalit] Mr. Peres, it has just been reported on the news that you expressed concern about the influence the Syrians will have on the pace of the ties developing between us and the Gulf emirates. Is Husni Mubarak joining Hafiz al-Asad in slowing down the peace process? Are you disappointed with Mubarak?

[Peres] No, I do not think that the first point is correct, therefore the second point is also incorrect. I think that Mubarak's aim is to encourage the peace process. He perhaps thinks that through a summit meeting with al-Asad he will also be able to influence Israel. I do not think Egypt is retreating from the peace process.

[Margalit] But Mubarak himself says unfavorable things about Israel's peace moves. He described Yitzhaq Rabin's policy as attempting to crumble, to divide....

[Peres, interrupting] He might be saying things like that, but I would like to say that instead of military confrontations, we now have political confrontations. I do not expect everybody to say amen or agree with every single thing we do, but that is the character of the change: We are dealing with policy and not war.

[Margalit] That point is clear, but next week you are leaving for Egypt and I assume you will meet with President Mubarak. Has there not been a retreat in the Egyptian position, although in general it is better to talk than to shoot?

[Peres] No, there is no retreat, because Egypt also previously expressed public support for the Syrian position, it is nothing new. I think the three are trying to create an atmosphere of unity in the Arab world. The truth is, in my view, that the division in the Arab world can be seen in the peace process.

[Margalit] For the good?

[Peres] No, it shows division. In other words, it is not the peace process which caused the problems in the Arab world, the problems exist, and they have become part of the peace process, which reflects the displeasure in the Palestinian camp. We did not create the problems. I would like to tell you something else. All the attempts to accuse Israel of looking for hegemony is baseless. Israel can survive economically without the Arab world, but

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Israel wants to see an advanced Arab world. The real problem facing us, to my knowledge, is not whether Israel will control the region, it is whether the region will seize control in the new era facing the world.

[Margalit] Is that what you are going to tell Mubarak? Is that why you are going to Egypt?

[Peres] No, I am going to Egypt for a different reason. We have a joint supreme liaison committee with the Palestinians, which convenes from time to time. This time, the Palestinians asked for the convening of the council and we agreed. In my last meeting with 'Arafat we said it would convene a week or two later, and we are meeting that target.

[Margalit] You are at the center of political activity because of the Arab summit in Egypt and because of the Palestinian link you have just mentioned. In the meantime, however, out of the north evil shall break forth; that is north of Efrat, where there is a dispute over land. Are you in favor of halting work there until the peace process progresses, or at least until the completion of the next stage in the Oslo accord?

[Peres] I am in favor of progress in the peace process. I think the events in Efrat have come at the wrong time and definitely impede on the peace process.

[Margalit] Then it should be stopped by a government decision?

[Peres] Definitely, yesterday there was an inner cabinet meeting, and it was decided to halt work until the attorney general presents his legal opinion on all the contracts, agreements, and the situation created, but this also calls for a constitutional process. Even former Prime Minister Menahem Begin, in his meeting with President Carter, agreed to freeze settlements for a period of time.

[Margalit] Three months.

[Peres] He said three months, Carter said for the entire negotiating period. You cannot simultaneously negotiate and deal with controversial facts on the ground.

[Margalit] The question is whether or not what the Palestinians did north of Efrat will be repeated elsewhere. This problem is not over yet and they are already preparing to prevent the paving of a road to Betar 'Ilit. A situation could arise whereby all the Judaea and Samaria settlements will come under siege because people turn up with certificates of ownership to the land leading up to them.

[Peres] That could be. We will have to deal with it, and I am sure we will find solutions. Our road is not paved with roses. The direction is correct, the way itself is strewn with many obstacles. I think it is similar to sleeping on a fakir's bed of nails. But we do not have a choice, we have to overcome all the problems with steely patience, not get carried away with generalities or panic. We overcame such difficulties in the past and we will do so again in the future. [passage omitted]

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English at 1600 GMT on 29 December reports that "Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin has described the Alexandria summit as, in his words, pathetic. Speaking to Qol Yisra'el, Beilin said that whatever the outcome of the meeting, it would be unimportant to the continuation of the peace process. Nations in the Middle East, which are due to benefit from the process, declared Beilin, will not listen to directions from Syrian President al-Asad."]

Paper: Summit Bid To Restore 'Old' Arab Order

TA2912161294 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 29 Dec 94 p A1

[Commentary by Gay Bekhor: "Back to the Old Middle East?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The tripartite summit in Alexandria among Presidents Hafiz al-Asad, Husni Mubarak, and Saudi Arabia's King Fahd, is the fiercest diplomatic collision of the last two years between the concept of a "new Middle East," promulgated by Israel among others, and the old Arab world order. The talks did not revolve exclusively around opposition to Israel's diplomatic breakthrough into the Arab world, although this was one of the main issues.

The main question was how to block the new order, in which every Arab country follows its own political and economic interests, most markedly vis a vis Israel, without any pan-Arab coordination; subsequently granting regional hegemony to the Jewish state.

In the course of the last two years, three powers—Syria, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia—have worked separately to contain Israel's diplomatic efforts in the region. The Syrians perceive any form of relations between Israel and an Arab country as a means to deepen their isolation; the Egyptians see Israel becoming a regional power, partly at their expense; the Saudis are unhappy about the Gulf Emirates recognizing and establishing relations with Israel, while circumventing their senior sister.

The importance of the Alexandria summit is that it may unify these three powers into a strong pan-Arab axis, which will work jointly to reunite the Arab world and effectively foil any Israeli initiatives for a new Middle East. Acting separately, the three were not particularly effective, although they did manage to block regional processes initiated by Israel. Jointly, however, the three countries may forge a new Arab agenda and change the rate of progress of the peace process.

This is a worrisome trend for Israeli diplomacy. The members of this new axis have three goals: First, to block the anticipated Israeli breakthrough into the Gulf states at the very last minute. In this respect, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's visit to Oman served as the catalyst for the tripartite summit.

The second goal is undermining King Husayn's standing. Mubarak, al-Asad, and Fahd have sharply criticized

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what they describe as the one-sided peace agreement between Jordan and Israel. The three leaders, together with Yasir 'Arafat, seek to strip Husayn of his status as the guardian of Temple Mount.

Their third goal is to reconvene the leaders of the Arab world, in an attempt to reimpose the rules of the old Arab order. With this end in mind, President al-Asad is even prepared to rehabilitate his old foe Saddam Husayn.

The tripartite meeting in Alexandria is a bit of a gamble on the part of its three participants because when it is over, their real power in the region will be revealed, and especially the degree of Syria's influence in setting the Arab agenda.

No Threat Seen to Arab-Israeli Ties

TA3012115694 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 30 Dec 94 p B1

[Editorial: "A Small Summit in Alexandria"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Arabic media referred to the tripartite meeting Egypt's President Husni Mubarak organized as "the small summit." It was attended by Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad, Saudi King Fahd, and President Mubarak. The Egyptian and Syrian presidents held four meetings over the past several months, and this time Mubarak wanted Fahd to attend as well.

It was not a pan-Arab meeting and it cannot dictate a unified line of Arab activity. According to the statement published at the close of the meeting, it focused on an attempt to find a framework in which to settle inter-Arab conflicts in peaceful ways, and expressed Egyptian and Saudi support for the Syrian stand. The joint declaration expresses an appreciation for Syria's efforts to promote peace and calls on Israel to remove the obstacles it is placing in the negotiations and to withdraw from the Golan Heights. The declaration does not demand that Arab countries stop the process of normalization with Israel, nor does it urge them to cancel agreements they have already signed.

Mubarak, who views himself as the Arab mediator between Israel and Syria, is aware of al-Asad's fear of remaining isolated in the negotiations with Israel when around him an increasing number of Arab countries hold official contacts with Israel. For many years, Egypt was the only country with peace relations with Israel, for which it was boycotted, by Syria as well. It therefore sympathizes with the Syrian feeling that it is losing allies and needs support. Egypt is willing to give Syria that support.

The Alexandria summit created a feeling of urgency and a fear that Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Syria intend to introduce a new Arab agenda. It should be remembered that Egypt has not changed and continues to support the peace process, even if it has differences with Israel. Many Israelis share the sentiment of the Egyptian foreign minister who said yesterday that the process is moving too slowly. The Saudi king, who at first seemed distant and indifferent to the process, has begun supporting it and even accepted a request to make a contribution to the Palestinian Authority. Last week, the Saudi mufti published an edict making a peace accord with Israel religiously correct, which is a political and religious landmark. It is hard to see the statement by an anonymous Saudi official, according to which Saudi Arabia will influence the Gulf countries to delay the establishment of relations with Israel, implemented in practice. For its part, Syria continues declaring its peace intentions even if the negotiations with it are stuck.

Traditionally, Israel flinches whenever Arab representatives meet to discuss Israeli-Arab relations. It is therefore reasonable to mention the fact that an impressive number of countries do hold official and friendly relations with Israel. Even the recent visit by Prime Minister Rabin to the Emirate of Oman was not forced upon it, but followed an invitation by the Omani sultan, who is a close friend of Mubarak. It is also no accident that Qatar announced its intention to open an interests office in Israel on the day the Alexandria summit convened. The Gulf emirates conduct an independent foreign policy stemming from their geographic location and the type of threat they fear. Morocco and Tunisia also demonstrated the independence of their relations with Israel, not to mention the Casablanca summit, which was attended by representatives of all the Arab countries except for Syria and Lebanon.

The Alexandria summit was attended by persons closely familiar with the Arab world and the disputes among its components. It was not held to create a new Arab world order nor to reverse the peace process. Israel must learn to live with the fact that coordination meetings between Arab leaders are a routine matter, and should not view them as threatening its evolving ties with the Arab world.

Chief of Staff Baraq Views Talks With Syria

TA2912143894 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1900 GMT 28 Dec 94

[Interview with Chief of Staff Ehud Baraq by Nisim Mish'al in the studio on 28 December from the "Conference Call" program—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Mish'al] Will you continue to be in charge of the talks with Syria?

[Baraq] I believe that the talks will continue and it is likely that I will participate in the next meeting. After that, I believe the issue will have to be discussed, because by then I will be out of uniform.

[Mish'al] Will the next meeting be held after you become a civilian?

[Baraq] I assume that this will be the case.

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[Mish'al] Can I conclude from this that you will continue to be in charge of the talks?

[Baraq] No you cannot. You can conclude that in the next meeting, for the sake of continuity....

[Mish'al, interrupting] If it is offered to you, will continue in the talks?

[Baraq] I cannot answer this question. Nobody offered this me and I am not dealing with the issue at this point. I will be discharged in....

[Mish'al, interrupting] Has the prime minister asked you to be in charge of these talks?

[Baraq] He has not made such an offer; we have not dealt with this issue. I assume that it will be necessary for me to participate in the next meeting in a few weeks. After that, I believe the prime minister will have to consider how best to continue dealing with this matter. Naturally, I am referring here to the military talks, because Itamar Rabinovich is in charge of the talks with Ambassador al-Mu'allim.

[Mish'al] It is possible, then, that you will continue. You have just said that after the next meeting the prime minister will have to consider how best to proceed.

[Baraq] I said nothing beyond the fact that I believe I will attend the next meeting, because it will be a continuation of the previous meeting, which was merely a preliminary meeting in which we did not submit documents or display maps. We spoke about principles....

[Mish'al, interrupting] Was the meeting with the Syrian chief of staff friendly?

[Baraq] I do not think the word friendly is appropriate for the first meeting after so many years of tension, suspicion, and hostility. The meeting, however, was extremely businesslike and down-to-earth. My interlocutor appeared to be serious, alert, very familiar with the subject matter, and very much a Syrian.

[Mish'al] According to the reports, he is a very high-level military figure, perhaps as high as number two in the Syrian hierarchy, directly after al-Asad.

[Baraq] He has been serving as chief of staff for many years. He started at about the time Mordekhay Gur was Israel's chief of staff and he belongs to the higher Syrian political echelon.

[Mish'al] Were you positively impressed by him?

[Baraq] Positively is not the right term. Syria was a tough adversary in war, and I am convinced it will be a tough adversary in negotiations if and when it proceeds beyond the exchange of opinions which marked the previous meeting.

[Mish'al] Is it true you asked him to curb Hizballah?

[Baraq] I do not want to divulge any details of the talks. I would just like to say that no documents were exchanged during the meeting.

[Mish'al] I am not asking you about documents. Did you tell him that Hizballah's attacks in the south pose difficulties on the path of negotiations?

[Baraq] Nisim, I said that I do not want to discuss the details of the meeting, so I will not give details.

[Mish'al] Is it possible to deduce from the situation on the ground that al-Asad did something?

[Baraq] I told you I will not go into detail, so I certainly will not refer to what has been done or has not been done on the ground. I am not convinced we should ask Syria to do anything regarding the attacks in the security zone.

[Mish'al] Is it possible, on the basis of these last meetings, to put the finger on the precise differences of opinion on security issues? According to the reports, Syria rejected all your proposals.

[Baraq] I do not want to talk about the content of the meetings. Our main objective is to realize security arrangements which will make it impossible, in practical terms, to initiate a surprise attack against Israel. We also want to minimize the incentive for launching an all out attack, as well as to minimize the possibility of a security crisis stemming from activities which are purportedly authorized by the agreement. These three things can be attained in more than one way, but they call for an extensive network of security arrangements, and I would not like to give the details here.

[Mish'al] Mr. Chief of Staff, from what you say it would appear that the IDF will be able to defend northern Israel without holding the Golan Heights.

[Baraq] That is not what I said. Both the cabinet and the public are cognizant of my professional opinion on this issue. The Americans and Syrians are also familiar with my position. At this stage I find no cause to deviate from this position.

[Mish'al] So are you saying that it will be possible to defend Israel without holding the Golan Heights?

[Baraq] No, my professional opinion is that even in peace it is militarily advisable for us to remain on the Golan Heights. At the same time this entire issue is extremely complicated and is related to the issue of normalization, the timetable and the stages....

[Mish'al, interrupting] What does the IDF need to defend the country without the Golan Heights?

[Baraq] Nisim, there are no simple answers to complicated questions. I already stated my professional opinion, namely, that even in peace it would be advisable to retain the Golan Heights. The decision on this issue will be made by the elected government of Israel, as is its right and duty.

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[Mish'al] The public currently watching you is asking itself a very simple question: Mr. Chief of Staff, can we defend northern Israel without the Golan Heights?

[Baraq] You will run out of time and not force me to give you answers I do not want to give. My professional opinion has been stated. I believe that at this point it is inappropriate and unnecessary to say anything more. I can only tell you that at this stage I have not told the Syrians anything more regarding the border issue. [passage omitted]

Baraq Views Effects of Changing Society on IDF

TA3012113794 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 30 Dec 94 p 9

[Interview with Chief of Staff Ehud Baraq by Alon Pinkas; place and date not given]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] [Pinkas] Israeli society is undergoing what may be a social, political, economic and cultural revolution. Has the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] been affected by it?

[Baraq] There is a transformation going on, but the pace is relatively slow. From a homogeneous and co-optive society, in which the individual is drafted into serving collective causes, Israel has turned into a vibrant consumer society striving for normalcy and maintaining a Western European standard of living.

The change is values is expressed in the individual perception of society as a platform for self-fulfillment. This converged with the beginning of a positive political peace process, but the concurrency can result in an error of judgment by assuming that security is no longer as central as it was.

[Pinkas] How does the General Staff perceive these developments and erosion of security as a central tenet of national existence?

[Baraq] This is one of the strongest, most talented and most competent general staffs in our history. I did not invent it...It was there when I became chief of staff. Its excellence originated in pre-1967-war Israeli society, when good men thought that security was not only central as an experience but it was their destiny to strengthen it. That generation had similar doubts about segments in society. We always questioned whether the "espresso generation" would be ready to fight a war, but they eventually did in 1967. A similar social environment is now required, one that regardless of a peace process still sees security as a central issue, because it simply is. Granted, the metamorphosis in Israeli society is eroding this environment.

[Pinkas] Is the strategic "long arm"—developed mainly during your tenure—the central component of the IDF's force building toward the year 2000?

[Baraq] There are three components: the long arm consisting of the advanced F-15I the US agreed to sell Israel, the Dolphin-class submarines built in Germany and other developments we keep to ourselves; second, the preparations and readiness to confront the challenges of the future battlefield; third, strengthening the main conventional force: Merkava 3 tanks, heavy armored personnel carriers, the newly acquired MLRS (multiple-launched rocket system) artillery and night-navigation systems.

(The integration of new systems) is supported by training, which during the first half of my tenure suffered due to intifada-related operations and routine activities in Lebanon. On the other side, it is supported by research and development.

Underlining these is a deep and thorough attention to manpower issues. We shortened induction processes and adapted them to our needs and the soldiers' wishes.

We invest tremendously in the officer cadre, both in selection processes and attracting fine officers to seek a career in the IDF through offering them academic studies, assistance in purchasing homes and other programs.

Lastly, a central component of force building and improvement is linking quality in performance and safety. The two are inseparable. There was only one soldier killed in a training accident this year, none last year. [passage omitted]

Jordan Seeking Ambassador With Economic Background

TA2912191694 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 29 Dec 94

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] There has been another cable from the Israeli representation in Jordan against the appointment of Efrayim Halevi as Israel's ambassador.

Our political correspondent 'Imanu'el Rosen reports that a cable received today by the Foreign Ministry contains remarks by a senior Jordanian Foreign Ministry source that King Husayn's decision to appoint an economist as ambassador to Israel was not a coincidence.

The Jordanians expect a similar appointment from Israel, not the appointment of a senior intelligence officer, which would arouse sharp criticism.

Jordan Said Displeased With Handling of al-Rujub

TA2912122694 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 29 Dec 94 p A 3

[Report by political correspondent Aluf Ben]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Jordan is disappointed with the way Israel is handling Palestinian activity in East Jerusalem, mainly with the freedom of activity enjoyed by the PLO and Jibril al-Rujub, head of the Palestinian

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Security Service. This was reported by defense elements in a professional discussion last week.

The defense elements added that Jordan had expected Israel to take steps that would restrict the PLO and bolster Jordan's status in East Jerusalem and the holy sites. According to the sources, this expectation followed from the Jordanian interpretation of the Israeli commitments undertaken in the Washington Declaration and the peace accord.

In their report, the defense elements further said that Jordan is now taking steps to harm the PLO. Among other things, it is restricting the import of olive oil and other products from the territories via the Jordan bridges. Jordan is also considering imposing a tax on Palestinian pilgrims headed for Mecca. As a result, Palestinians are choosing to make the pilgrimage via Egypt instead. [passage omitted]

IDF Bans Protests at Efrat Site

TA2912173094 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1600 GMT 29 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Peace Now has petitioned the High Court for permission to demonstrate against the planned expansion of the settlement of Efrat. The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] has denied permission to protest at the site as well as any demonstrations whatsoever in the Bethlehem and 'Etzyon Bloc area until further notice. The head of Central Command, Major General Ilan Biran said he made the decision out of security considerations and to preserve public order. Meanwhile, the High Court today turned down a request by Palestinians to issue a temporary halt to construction, saying they had not filed properly. No'omi Segal visited the site and had this report:

[Begin recording] [Segal] [passage omitted] The dispute took on an international dimension when foreign diplomats toured the site to assess the situation first hand. The representatives from Britain, France, Sweden, Belgium, and Spain said they were concerned about the implications the conflict could have for the peace process between Israel and the Palestinians. French Deputy Consul General (Jean Christoff Posel) also said that international law is applicable in this dispute. [passage omitted] [end recording]

The Israel army this afternoon evacuated the demonstrators from Husan village trying to stop the paving of a road to Betar because they claim the land has been appropriated illegally. The roadwork is continuing. The Palestinian Authority said it would supervise the expansion work of Jewish settlements and road paving in Judaea and Samaria.

Settlers Oppose Palestinian-Owned Gas Station

TA3012060194 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 30 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tensions between Palestinians and Jewish settlers have arisen at a different site, this time in the Jordan Valley. Last night Jewish residents brought tractors to a site that had been marked and cleared for construction of a Palestinian-owned gas station. They destroyed the markings and foundation in an effort to block construction of a Palestinian business near a Jewish settlement. The Civil Administration says the Palestinian who is trying to build the gas station, a resident of nearby Janin, obtained all necessary permits for its construction.

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Gumen Attack Police Station at Refugee Camp

MM2912160194 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 29 Dec 94 p 1

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Well-informed sources have revealed to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that a number of masked gunmen attacked a Jordanian police station in al-Buq'ah camp inhabited by Palestinian refugees, wounding a number of people.

The sources said that the incident is linked to the sentences passed against the leader of the "Jordanian Afghans" organization and a number of its members, which included 11 death sentences.

No official Jordanian statement or comment has been issued on the incident, which occurred Sunday night/ Monday morning and following which a number of suspects were arrested. [passage omitted]

'Source' Cited on 'Arafat Visit, Palestinian Ties

JN2812185294 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 28 Dec 94

[Report by Randah Habib in Amman]

[FBIS Translated Text] Jordan has expressed its readiness to receive Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the Palestinian National Authority, despite the cool Jordanian-Palestinian relations.

A well-informed source said a meeting between 'Arafat and Jordanian monarch King Husayn may be held in Amman early next month after Husayn's return from Austria.

Political circles in Jordan spoke about a coolness, if not estrangement, in Jordanian-Palestinian relations after 'Arafat and his aides gave several indications that showed much sensitivity toward Jordan.

These circles said that the bilateral economic agreements have not been implemented and that some of these agreements were not signed at the instructions of 'Arafat himself.

The coolness increased after 'Arafat's position on Jordan's role in taking care of the Islamic shrines in Jerusalem, which was mentioned in the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty signed two months ago.

A ranking Jordanian official told us that his country has not changed, and will not change its position on Jerusalem, which considers Jerusalem an occupied territory to which Security Council Resolution 242 applies. The official said Jordan deals with Jerusalem as a trust that it takes care of and protects its shrines until the Palestinians become able to spread their sovereignty on it as Prince Hasan said during the Casablanca economic summit that was held under King Hassan II [of Morocco], and attended by 'Arafat.

The official stressed the clarity of the Jordanian policy, and expressed surprise at the Palestinian delegation's position during the Islamic summit held in Casablanca two months later, which refused to recognize the Jordanian role in Jerusalem.

According to the same official, this position gave others the chance to exploit the situation that will eventually be at the expense of Jerusalem and the shrines.

The source said these parties shoulder the full historic responsibility for the possible repercussions of the attempts to entrench and enhance the position that emerged during Casablanca summit.

An Arab diplomatic source said the PLO, backed by Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and Egypt, seeks to marginalize Jordan's role through the Jerusalem Committee that will convene mid-January.

Agenda of Alexandria Summit Examined

JN2912132894 Amman AL-ASWAQ in Arabic 29 Dec 94 pp 1, 12

[Unattributed "News Analysis"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Alexandria summit in northern Egypt held by Egyptian President Mubarak, Syrian President al-Asad, and Saudi King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz is a continuation of the new Arab axis formed at the Islamic summit in Casablanca. It reflects the high level of fragmentation in inter-Arab relations and the advanced state of the lack of coordination among Arab leaders that negatively affects the performance of the Arab League. It is assumed that one of the Arab League's main priorities is to end tension and its effects on relations among Arab countries.

A review of the agenda of this summit, which may resume today, Thursday, indicates that this axis—whose interests clash with those of Jordan and of the self-rule authority at this stage—seeks to exert pressure on Jordan. This is especially true since more than one Arab country has failed in their attempts to exploit the Jordanian card in order to serve their own regional ambitions, which clash with Jordanian sovereignty rights and aspirations to build the Jordan of the future based on peace, justice, and comprehensive development. Moreover, it seems that this axis, which has complained that some Arab countries held contacts and normalized relations with Israel before progress was achieved in the negotiations with Israel on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks—as indicated in the statements following the first session of the summit meeting of this axis in Alexandria—did not take into account the inter-Arab agreements reached at the Madrid conference. It also abandoned the Arab summit card instead of activating it. This reflects a desire to race toward belittling Jordan's accomplishments in restoring its rights to its territories and waters. It is also an attempt to drive a wedge into Jordanian-Palestinian relations and create tension in these relations by using the card of the holy shrines in Jerusalem.

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Well informed diplomatic sources noted that what the Islamic summit showed in terms of a new Arab alliance confirms Jordan's conviction that the Arab League did not rise to the required level. Moreover, the Islamic summit gave another indication that this new axis, which began reinforcing its steps at the Alexandria summit, expresses the inability of the countries within this axis to deal with successive developments. It also exposes the stalemate that is quickly becoming an impasse in terms of continuing the peace process on the other tracks as a result of the imminent Israeli and U.S. elections.

On the status of holy shrines in Jerusalem and the issue of religious jurisdiction over them, the source noted the historic role played by Jordan in supervising and taking care of these places, Jordan's recognition of Palestinian sovereignty over Jerusalem after an acceptable solution is reached, as well as its efforts to eradicate the vacuum that could result from Jordan's failure to handle the issue of Jerusalem's holy places and jurisdiction over them.

The source questioned the formation of a new axis and its activation instead of calling for an Arab summit to discuss Arab issues and coordinate efforts toward these issues in order to clear the atmosphere and achieve Arab the solidarity that constitutes the core of Arab summits. However, the source added, if the real objective is to exert pressure on Jordan or to exploit the Palestinian card by creating a clamor over the issue of the holy places or over achieving progress on some tracks and while others stumble, the source pointed out that Egypt was the first to choose the road to peace and was the first to sign a treaty with Israel, in addition to the role it played in convincing Arab parties to sign agreements with the Jewish state.

Summit 'Consolidates New Arab Axis'

JN3012095394 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 30 Dec 94 pp 1, 18

[Editorial: "Disappointing Communique"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Other than the beautiful and obsolete talk about Arab solidarity, the communique issued by the tripartite summit in Alexandria yesterday was void of anything calling for optimism that this surprise summit might be the beginning of a new era in the Arab political life, whose miserable situation cannot be treated with lofty language and old slogans.

Probably the first thing noted by the Arab citizen, who is already suffering thanks to axes, differences, and traditional Arab grudges, is this long discourse by the tripartite summit on the need to enhance Arab solidarity and joint Arab action at the same time efforts were underway to consolidate yet another new Arab axis. We had hoped the bitter experiences and valuable lessons of the past would have ensured that this policy of axes will not come to life again.

We read the communique of the summit with regret and disappointment because the communique did not call for a single step that could be viewed as a new and different start from the current situation of the Arab nation, which is in dire need of a new Arab vision that copes with the spirit of the age and the changes that are taking place and cannot be ignored.

Even if we overlook the fact that the tripartite summit neglected, if not fully disregarded, the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty that was constitutionally approved by the legislative establishments in Jordan and the fact that there is a Palestinian National Authority, why did the communique undercut the recent Casablanca Islamic summit, which supported the peace process and what had been realized on this or that track?

As for the suffering of the Iraqi people, which stands as a burden to the Arab and Islamic conscience at this difficult time and amid calls for solidarity, the communique adopted the position of countries that are the fiercest in their hostility to the Iraqi people and the most determined to perpetuate this tragedy. We know that this tragedy would not have continued in this regrettable manner without the insistence of certain Arabs and their relentless efforts to perpetuate this tragedy for a long time.

We wish express our deep regret and disappointment with the tripartite summit's communique and we are fully confident that the road to Arab solidarity is not through axes or through ignoring the facts on the ground. Furthermore, this hoped-for solidarity cannot be attained through rhetoric and good wishes, but must come after the complete relinquishment of the policy of seeking small, quick gains and the mentality of grudges and pursuing tactical negotiating cards.

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Buwayz Views Air Travel Ban on Country

NC2912180294 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 29 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The BBC today held two separate interviews with Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz and Health Minister Marwan Hamadah on the general situation in the country and the tasks of the security committee that was formed.

Minister Buwayz once again affirmed that it is impossible for the security committee to be changed into a working team that can hold security meetings with the Israeli side because the committee is fully independent from the peace process and has nothing to do with the negotiating process with Israel. The objective of the committee is to discuss bilateral relations with the United States and some U.S. security requirements regarding air travel to Lebanon.

The foreign minister noted that Lebanon did not actually ask that the ban on air travel to Lebanon be lifted. Lebanon is interested in setting the minds of the Americans at ease regarding the security achievements that have taken place during the past few years. This might facilitate their decisionmaking on the air travel ban on Lebanon. He pointed out that the recent security achievements in Lebanon are considered better than those in at least 80 percent of the world.

Replying to a question, Minister Buwayz said that the method of prematurely throwing cards before Israel has never been beneficial because Israel does not show any flexibility in the negotiating process or approach it emotionally. [passage omitted]

Minister Thanks Security for Uncovering Bombing

NC3012075194 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0530 GMT 30 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Engineer Michel al-Murr, deputy prime minister and interior minister, has thanked the security agencies for uncovering the crime of the car-bomb in the southern suburb of Beirut, in cooperation with the Syrian security forces. He stressed that the military court will look into this case. He said that this case does not require international forums. He noted that the security delegation's mission in Washington does not require the interior minister. [passage omitted]

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Al-Asad Returns From Alexandria Summit

JN2912184994 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 29 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad returned to Damascus this evening after a two-day visit to Alexandria, where he met with His Excellency President Muhammad Husni Mubarak of the Arab Republic of Egypt, and King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, custodian of the two holy mosques.

Returning with him were Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam and Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'.

Mini-Summit Aims To Bolster Arab Ranks

JN2912144794 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1235 GMT 29 Dec 94

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: It is no longer a secret to anyone that the continuation of the Arab situation as it is, in terms of fragmentation, splits, and lack of the minimum level of coordination, does not serve the nation's interests, but inflicts grave harm on its existence and future. It is also no secret that Israel has exploited the weakness and fragmentation of Arab ranks to impose separate agreements and to divert the peace process from its objectives and bases. Israel has indeed been able to penetrate the Arab ranks and promote a series of falsehoods, such as that it seeks peace and that it achieved peace with the Palestinians while the Arab territories remain under occupation.

It was natural for some Arab leaders to call for a meeting to discuss all developments in the region and the means of eliminating the deteriorating situation which reflected negatively on Arab rights. It is well known that Syria has always been at the head of those who call for Arab reflection and a comprehensive review of all developments. It has sought to coordinate positions among the Arab parties participating in the peace process. It has always put the Arab leaders in the picture of what is taking place. The Arab- Israeli conflict is a pan-Arab conflict, and any decision or settlement of the Middle East crisis requires a pan-Arab stand that is up to the level of challenges in order to safeguard the nation's interests and future.

Based on this, the significance of the Alexandria mini-summit—comprising President Hafiz al-Asad, Egyptian President Husni Mubarak, and Saudi King Fahd—can be understood. President Hafiz al-Asad's participation in this summit falls within the context of his persistent efforts to improve the Arab situation in order to achieve the aspired solidarity and to confirm the constants of the just and comprehensive solution to the Middle East crisis. The most important of these constants is Israel's full withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories in implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, and 425.

The Alexandria mini-summit, which is focused on the general Arab conditions and the means to remove Arab differences, aims at bolstering Arab ranks and strengthening the Arab position to face the current phase with a unified view. Israel, which succeeded in making more than one Arab party depart from the framework of the just and comprehensive solution, is daily displaying further arrogance and intransigence and declares in public that it refuses to withdraw from the Golan Heights, southern Lebanon, and Jerusalem. It even continues the settlement activities on a large scale. It has thus far annexed 40 percent of the West Bank area. Its bulldozers continue to raze Palestinian land to change its nature and annex it to the settlements.

The Arabs are not standing united in the face of the Israeli intransigence to stress that occupation and peace will never meet. Instead, some Arabs did not hesitate to go their separate way and open their borders to the Israelis. This reflected negatively on the march of the just and comprehensive peace. Israel may be saying that if there are some who are showing willingness to cooperate and normalize ties without a withdrawal from the occupied territories, then why should there be a withdrawal.

Finding a remedy to the current Arab situation is a very important task. There is no alternative to coordinating positions, underlining constants, and exemplifying the Arabs' solidarity, in words and deeds, with Syria and Lebanon, which are facing Israel's expansionist designs and adhering to its full withdrawal and the return of Arab rights. The unity of Arab ranks and adherence to the constants of the solution will lead to the just and comprehensive peace that would end occupation and guarantee the return of territory to its lawful owners.

Alexandria Summit 'Turning Point' in Arab Action

JN3012091694 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 30 Dec 94

[Press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] The newspaper AL-THAWRAH comments on the importance of the tripartite summit that brought together His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad, President Muhammad Husni Mubarak of Egypt, and King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, describing it as the hope for revitalizing Arab cohesion.

The paper adds: The summit has been held [illegible] when the Arab arena is unbalanced due to internal and external factors that have shaken the Arab conscience and rocked the walls of solidarity, which will remain the mainstay that the nation can use in its confrontation of ordeals, challenges, and storms. Nobody should underestimate the tripartite Arab summit and the topics and issues it has discussed; namely, the issues pertaining to the overall Arab state of affairs and the Middle East peace process. These topics and issues were discussed against the backdrop of the deadlock plaguing the

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Middle East peace process after more than three years of peace talks, and the obstacles standing in the way of a just and comprehensive peace, thanks to Israel's harmful and intransigent stands and its evasion of the relevant UN resolutions.

AL-THAWRAH goes on to say: This summit is extraordinary as a turning point in joint Arab action and in addressing the issues of the phase from a position of strength. The summit aimed to protect the Arab identity and pan-Arab existence, and to face up to the Israeli expansionist drive.

AL-THAWRAH concludes by saying that joint and close cooperation among the three Arab states under these delicate circumstances will remain indispensable. This cooperation is the hope for laying new foundations to reestablish Arab solidarity and restore pan-Arab rights in the Golan, southern Lebanon, and the remaining occupied Arab territories.

In its commentary today, the newspaper TISHRIN also comments on the summit, asserting that the Alexandria summit that brought together Presidents al-Asad and Mubarak and King Fahd revived the hopes of rectifying the deteriorating Arab state of affairs, rebuilding pan-Arab solidarity, and rehabilitating the institutions of joint Arab action, chief among which is the Arab League. The paper indicates that the leaders at the summit expressed their appreciation of Syria's stand and serious efforts to render the peace process a success. They also expressed their firm support for its just demands, and called upon Israel to effect a complete withdrawal from the Golan, southern Lebanon, and the remaining occupied territories. Moreover, they held Israel responsible for the obstacles standing in the way of just peace.

TISHRIN notes that the three leaders urged the international community to establish a zone free of mass destruction weapons, and asserted that coordination and cooperation among them will continue. These leaders agreed to reinforce the role of the Arab League and the institutions of joint Arab action. Moreover, they called for resolving inter-Arab disputes in a spirit of trust and fraternity.

The paper adds: All this confirms that the Alexandria summit has measured up to the challenges posed and taken the lead in the efforts to improve the deteriorating Arab state of affairs and remedy the serious ailment plaguing the Arab people. Hence, Syria's persistent efforts, under His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad, to reestablish Arab solidarity, heal rifts, and coordinate stands.

TISHRIN concludes by saying: The restoration of Arab rights and territories requires the rehabilitation of Arab solidarity, adherence to constants, and determination not to abandon rights or pursue separate solutions. For the Arabs' strength lies in their unity, whereas their weakness is the inevitable outcome of their division and pursuit of separate solutions. Undoubtedly, the Alexandria summit provided more than a ray of hope. It is a serious effort to effect a pan-Arab renaissance.

For its part, the newspaper AL-BA'TH addresses the Alexandria summit, asserting that it has lent further momentum to the efforts to rehabilitate Arab solidarity. The paper adds that coping with the current Arab state of affairs is not impossible to achieve. The Alexandria summit has given rise for hopes that inter-Arab ties will witness a relaxation, and that the Arab identity will prevail.

AL-BA'TH goes on to say: The leaders attending the tripartite summit believe that constructive cooperation among Arab states is the safety net for the future aspired to by our nation. Likewise, it is the means that could bring about an Arab effort to remedy the situation and address the challenges posed to the Arabs everywhere. The guidelines set forth by the Alexandria summit must be pursued, because these guidelines will allow us to restore our rights and free will, away from intervention or interference in the affairs of our Arab homeland by external elements.

The paper says: The Alexandria summit was the beginning of efforts to remedy the situation. Besides, this summit has come to confirm anew that Israeli penetrations here or there cannot provide protections for those who do not show restraint. Nor can Israel be the ally that would prompt others to forget their Arabism.

AL-BA'TH concludes by saying: The leaders at the Alexandria summit have underscored that joint Arab cooperation and constant inter-Arab coordination provide the inevitable alternative to the ideas and views expressed by Israeli leaders.

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Bangladesh

Ziaur Agrees To Elections Under Neutral Rule

BK2912155394 Hong Kong AFP in English 1511 GMT 29 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Dhaka, Dec 29 (AFP)—Prime Minister Khaleda Ziaur on Thursday conceded to opposition demands, saying her administration would agree to step down ahead of new elections which would be held under a neutral caretaker government.

"Myself and my cabinet will resign 30 days ahead of elections," she said at a rally of her ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party outside Dhaka, and appealed to opposition MPs to "rethink" their resignation from parliament Wednesday.

"There is still time and for the sake of the country I hope you will rethink your decision" to resign, she said.

The opposition resigned en masse from parliament Wednesday, demanding elections under a neutral caretaker government, alleging that free polls were impossible under Ziaur's administration.

Ziaur's latest proposal would mean her resignation 30 days prior to the end of her term in early 1996.

Opposition leader Sheikh Hasina Wajed said earlier Thursday that the MPs would reconsider their "stand" if their demands were met by the government, but avoided saying if this included ending the current parliamentary crisis.

Offers To Quit Before Election

BK3012033994 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 30 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The prime minister of Bangladesh, Begum Khaleda Ziaur Rahman, has offered to resign before the 1996 general elections.

Speaking at a rally near the capital Dhaka last night, she said that she will quit office one month before the elections and asked the opposition members of parliament to reconsider their mass resignation from Parliament.

This is the first time that Begum Khaleda Ziaur Rahman has publicly accepted the opposition's demand. The prime minister called the opposition for a discussion to end the 10th month long political stalemate. Reports say that Begum Khaleda Ziaur Rahman had made the conditional offer to the opposition during closed door talks earlier during the day. But, the opposition leader, Sheikh Hasina, demanded the prime minister's resignation immediately and elections under a neutral caretaker government. At a press conference, she said with the resignation of all the opposition members from the parliament, the legislature has become defunct and the Khaleda Ziaur Rahman government illegal.

Opposition Rejects Offer

BK3012085994 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 30 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Bangladesh opposition parties have rejected the prime minister Begum Khaleda Ziaur Rahman's offer to resign a month before the next general elections in 1996. Her offer came following the resignation of all the opposition members from parliament. The opposition is demanding immediate general elections under a neutral caretaker government.

Strike Called by Opposition Observed 'Peacefully'

BK2912130094 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in Bengali 1230 GMT 29 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] The half-day strike called by the opposition parties in parliament was observed peacefully throughout the country today. Some rickshaws were seen plying [words indistinct] in the capital and no untoward incidents were reported.

Iran

Rafsanjani Discusses Marja'iyat Issue

LD3012121494 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran Provincial Program in Persian 0750 GMT 30 Dec 94

[Second Friday Prayers sermon by President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani in Tehran—live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. [passage omitted] The first issue I want to talk about concerns marja'iyat [state of being a source of emulation], which is still the issue of the day. However, I want to talk about other aspects of the issue. Thanks be to God, following all the recent talk and debate in the media, the issue has to a great extent become clear and our people are no longer lost. They are now capable of choosing a marja and they are informed about the issue. [passage omitted]

There is one important point I want to mention. A great injustice was about to be committed against the history of Shi'ism, the history of marja'iyat, and above all, against the honorable leader [Khamene'i] himself, against his spirit and character.

The roots of this injustice are found in arrogance; this injustice is rooted in Zionist and imperialist media circles who tried to a great extent to distort the truth in a mischievous way. Had it not been for the wise remarks of our great leader, who rapidly cleared the issue for us by saying all that needed to be said, they nearly succeeded in distorting this historical truth in their propaganda.

Their aim from the beginning was to pollute the holy position of marja'iyat by alleging materialism, power seeking, and a power struggle. They were trying to apply

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to our marja'iyat the same arguments that they have in the West, in the materialistic parties of the West and the East, over getting political positions. The picture they were trying to portray through their propaganda was this, that a power struggle started in our society after the death of the great marja, His Eminence Grand Ayatollah Araki. They were trying to say that our ulema and learned ones are at each others' throats in order to get hold of this mantle [of marja'iyat].

This truly is the worst historical injustice to the holy position of leadership. We who are in the thick of things know that leadership [pauses] ... Well, the issue of political leadership is separate from the leadership of the guardianship of the supreme jurisconsult [velayat-e faqih] which has recently started showing its greatness in our country.

What was the form of marja'iyat that existed? Throughout the history of Shi'ism, the most suitable candidates reached the position of absolute marja'iyat naturally, by being chosen gradually by the people. Always, when an absolute marja passed away, there used to be a certain amount of concern and bewilderment, but the marja would gradually be chosen. [passage omitted] This has always been the case. The people gradually followed their absolute marja.

There has been a sense of holiness and spirituality surrounding this issue. And the issue was so serious for us that we always thought the issue had the approval of the Lord of the Age [12th and hidden Shi'i imam]. The sacred spirit of the Lord of the Age would gradually choose a marja from among the people.

Suddenly, a wave of propaganda was launched against us. This is the most basic form of cultural onslaught. The situation was portrayed like this: the great clerics are at each others' throats; there is a power struggle. Well, the younger generation knows nothing about this issue, because they do not have the same experiences as we have. In the old days, these media did not exist. They tried to make real this ugly historical distortion.

The second point here—which could have inflicted even more damage, because there were more voices of approval in society for the eminent leader to be marja—the main weight of the propaganda was leaning toward causing mayhem in the minds of the people, saying: in this case too [Khamene'i], there is greed for marja'iyat, greed for leadership and power.

This was even more bitter for us. It was especially bitter for me since I know the honorable leader of the revolution better than anyone else. This was very bitter for me since I could see that the truth was being distorted in the world, as though he were seeking such a position. There were also wrong analyses by the Western media such as victory [for Khamene'i in the marja'iyat race] etc.

I know him very well. I used to get really upset when I saw the truth get distorted in this way. The position of marja'iyat is different from other positions. Even concerning ordinary positions which could also have materialistic aspects, he never sought positions in these cases. Please accept my testimony. I have known him for a long time, from my youth to the present day. I have never seen him seek a position of leadership, a management position, or any important position. I have never seen him show an interest in such jobs. He always waited for more suitable people to take up these posts. This is the truth, I have not seen anything contrary to this yet. Well, this is very important: to be with someone for 40 years, more than 40 years through all these phases, and some of those jobs would tempt some people.

At the beginning of the revolution, when everyone wanted the pioneers of the revolution to join the Revolutionary Council, we had to plead with him [Khamene'i], and it was after instructions had been given by the imam [Khomeyni] that we succeeded in inviting him over from Mashhad to come here and join the Council.

You will never know the trouble I had to go to in order to convince him to accept the candidacy, when there was the issue of presidency to consider. When his first term in office ended, he would not even listen to what I [stress on preceding word] said about the second term. We insisted that society needed him, but nonetheless we still had to go to the imam, who told him he should accept the post. It was not the imam's way of doing things to tell people to assume this and that post. But it had to happen in that particular case.

The last occasion had to do with leadership. On the day our beloved imam was on his deathbed, we faced a really serious problem and we did not know how we could resolve the issue of velayat-e faqih and leadership. When we talked to him [Khamene'i] about this in Jamaran [Khomeyni's former residence], that is we talked to him about his membership in a leadership council and not about assuming the post of a single leader, he was totally reluctant. A group of us finally managed to convince him to join the leadership council. As you know, the Constitution has made provisions both for a single leader and a leadership council, and at the time there was talk of a council. He was finally convinced after a great deal of effort by us.

The subjects I am now talking about have not been made public before because they were largely matters which concerned just the two of us. However, there are written records of what I am going to say next, and you can go and refer to them.

When the Assembly of Experts was debating the issue of either a single leader or a leadership council—although it had been decided that should the Assembly opt for a single leader, their vote would be given to him [Khamene'i]—he and I defended the thesis in the Assembly that a leadership council should be formed, and we voted in favor of such an option. However, he delivered a speech to the Assembly advising against the option of a single leader and urged the formation of a leadership council.

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That was to do with leadership, which is much more important than marja'iyat; that is as much as the world considers to be important in the framework of political power. The two are not comparable, as with one single hint from the leader, a country can be altogether transformed [as heard].

He came forward and delivered a speech. Anyone interested can obtain a copy of the speech from the Assembly of Experts. He urged them to vote for a leadership council.

All I have said so far has concerned only the past. I have many things to say about the present circumstances, but I do not have the time here. I have talked a great deal to him about the present issue. Between us and our God, the truth is that ever since the day Grand Ayatollah Araki's serious illness became known up to the present, I have never once seen in the course of our talks a trace of any tendency on his part to accept our recognition of him as the marja'.

If history wants to write that he has been trying in one way or another to assume the position of marja'iyat, or that there has been a power struggle or a sense of victory, etc., this would constitute the greatest injustice both to the history of marja'iyat and to him personally. He is the type of human being who has nothing in mind but God, serving God, and carrying out his divine obligations.

The problem is that they [the West] do not really know anything. They simply listen to speeches and view events from a distance, without learning anything. This is because they have not been anywhere near here. Moreover, getting to know such people [like Khamene'i] is not altogether an easy task.

In any case, a great injustice was about to take place in history. But, praise be to God, he wisely spoke out about the issues. I do not intend to repeat what he said, since you have heard that for yourselves, and he has spoken about what he thinks it is necessary for us to know. I thought that if I did not clarify this point for history today, then I would never know whether the pages of history will ever reflect the truth or not. However, I would like what I said today—which is merely a page out of a whole book—to be recorded in history, so that on the one hand it becomes clear that marja'iyat is not what they [the West] think, and on the other hand that it would be possible to become more familiar with the personality of our vali-e faqih and leader, His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i. [passage omitted]

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